

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM

1759

A SPOT SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF WOLFE AND MONTCALM

MORTEM. VIRTUS. COMMUNEM.

FAMAM. HISTORIA.

MONUMENTUM. POSTERITAS. DEBIT.

Inscription on Wolfe's and Montcalm's Monument at Quebec.

AN APPEAL TO ALL CANADA FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM AS PORTION
OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN.



LP
F5012
1899
P69A

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1899

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM⁽¹⁾

THE HISTORIC BATTLE-FIELD OF CANADA — 1759, ITS HISTORY, Etc.

ON THE THREATENED DESECRATION OF THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM

Put off thy shoes from off thy feet
The place is holy; softly tread
On earth that is a winding sheet
About the nation's sacred dead.

Montcalm and Wolfe! their glory such,
And such the outcome of their strife
That, under War's transmuting touch,
A new-born Nation leaped to life.

The red "Anstruthers," white "La Reine,"
The Highland "Fraser," "Languedoc,"
Their memory consecrates the Plain,
Their fame endures while lasts its rock;—

Their shades cry to us from its sod
To guard inviolate their dust;—
They died for Country, King and God!
Shall we prove faithless to our trust?

WILLIAM MCLENNAN.

24th Nov., 1898.

LES PLAINES D'ABRAHAM

Passant, dépose ici ta sandale, ô mon frère!
Ce sol est saint, silence! et que tes pas amis
Foulent avec respect le gazon funéraire
Qui recouvre les os des géants endormis.

Montcalm et Wolfe! ô noms sacrés de notre histoire
Tous deux vous avez eu ce destin fortuné:
Que votre lutte épique et votre double gloire
Ont consacré l'essor d'un peuple nouveau-né!

Régiment d'Anstruther, régiment de la Reine!
Rouges, Blancs, clans d'Ecosse et gars de Plougastel,
Tous ont mêlé leur sang sur la fameuse arène,
Et leur nom plane ici sur ce roc immortel.

De ces hauteurs, la voix de leurs ombres nous crie
De ne point violer leur éternel repos.
Ils sont morts pour leur roi, pour Dieu, pour leur patrie:
Allons-nous rester sourds à l'appel des héros?

Traduit de l'anglais de William McLennan.

par LOUIS FRÉCHETTE.

(1) At a special meeting of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, on 18th April, 1899, the President was authorized to collect and publish in its *Transactions*, the leading notices of the press and resolutions passed by the Literary and Historical and other historical societies of the Dominion, to press on the Government the preservation as part of the public domain, of the famous battle-ground of Canada.

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"In little more than two year's time, unless prompt action be taken by the Federal authorities in the meantime, the historic battle field of the Plains of Abraham (1) will disappear from view and become transformed into an outlying suburb of the city of Quebec. The owners of the property have already had it surveyed and divided into building lots, made to face upon nine projected streets. They count upon a ready sale of the land in question, because the construction of the electric railway brings the street cars to the very margin of the property. The corporation of the city of Quebec is unable, under its charter, to take any action to preserve the battlefield in its present shape, for it is situated altogether without the limits of the ancient city. Municipally, the Plains form part of the parish of Quebec, which is governed by a village council headed by Mayor William Lee. Almost ninety-nine years ago, on the 1st May, 1802, the Imperial War Department took means to preserve the historic grounds intact for close upon a century of time, by leasing them from the Ursuline Nuns for a period of ninety-nine years. It is the approaching expiration of this lease that affords the Sisters of the Ursuline Convent the opportunity of throwing the site of Wolfe's and Montcalm's glorious exploits upon the market for building lots. They owned the property long before it was sanctified by the blood of heroes. It has been in their possession for over two centuries. Nor is it the only relic of the battle of the strong that the good Sisters own. Under a glass case in the parlour of their convent, in an excellent state of preservation is the skull of General Montcalm. The balance of his mortal remains lie at rest beneath the chapel of their institution, and above them is a marble bearing the elegant inscription prepared for the purpose at the instance of the French Academy. In bombarding the city, previous to his landing below the Heights

(2) Area of the plains of Abraham leased by military government, as exercising grounds for the troops: by Lease of 99 years from 1st May, 1802, before Frs. Tétu, N. P., 23rd February, 1803, 67 acres, 3 roods, 6 perches.

of Abraham, Wolfe's auxiliaries had dug the grave of the French commander, by means of a shell that ploughed an excavation in the chapel of the Ursulines.

The title deeds to the Plains of Abraham show that they were sold to the Nuns on the 1st July, 1667, by the heirs of Abraham Martin, and that at that time they contained thirty-two arpents, or acres, in superficies. Martin's title to the property was in three divisions: Twelve acres were conceded to him on the 16th May, 1650, by la Compagnie de la Nouvelle-France, and thirty acres were donated to him by Adrien Duchesne, part on the 10th October, 1648, and part on the 1st February, 1652.

It was from this Martin that the famous battlefield derived its name. Sir James M. LeMoine, in his *Picturesque Quebec*, states that from 1621 to 1700, only one individual in Quebec appears, from references to the Parish Register, to have borne the name of Abraham. That person was Abraham Martin, a man of so much distinction in the infant colony that both in the *Journal of the Jesuits* and in the Parish Register of Quebec, he was frequently designated only by the name "Maître Abraham." The earliest mention of Martin's name occurs in the very first entry of the Parish Register of Quebec, on the 24th October, 1621, when his son Eustache, who died shortly afterwards, was baptized by Father Denis, a Franciscan friar. Champlain, the distinguished founder of Quebec, and father of New France, was god-father to one of Abraham's daughters, Hélène, and the then owner of the Plains is described in a legal document, dated 15th August, 1646, and preserved in the archives of the Archbishop's Palace here, as (the King's) pilot of the St. Lawrence; an appointment, says Lieut.-Col. Beatson, of the Royal Engineers, in a work on the Plains, published at Gibraltar, in 1858—which probably conferred on its possessor considerable official rank, for we find that Jacques Cartier, the enterprising discoverer and explorer of the St. Lawrence, when about to proceed in 1540, on his third voyage to Canada, was appointed by Francis I, captain-general

and master pilot of the expedition, which consisted of four vessels. Such, in brief, is the history of the ownership of the Plains of Abraham, from the earliest days of the colony up to the present time. Within the last quarter of a century there have been proposals to beautify the place and transform it into a park, but these have all failed in consequence of the discovery that the land reverts to the Nuns in May, 1901.

The departure from Canada of England's red-coated legions in 1871, amongst other voids, left waste, untenanted and unoccupied, the historic area, which had been for close upon a century reserved as their parade and exercising ground on review days. The military authorities, always so careful in keeping its fences in repair, handed it over to the Dominion, which made no provision for the purpose. On the 9th March, 1875, the Dominion, Government leased it to the corporation of the city of Quebec for ten years of the lease under which it was held from the Religious Ladies of the Ursulines of Quebec, provided the corporation assumed the conditions of the lease, involving an annual rental of two hundred dollars. The extensive conflagration of 1876, which laid waste one half of St. Louis suburbs, and the consequent impoverished state of the municipal finances prevented the civic authorities from voting any money to maintain in proper order the fences of the Plains. Decay, ruin and disorder were fast settling down upon the place, when a number of the citizens of Quebec spontaneously came to the rescue. In November, 1876, an association was formed, composed as follows: His Honour Lieut.-Gov. Caron. His Worship Mayor Owen Murphy, Chief Justice Meredith, Hon. Judge Tessier, Hon. E. Chinic, Hon. D. E. Price, Chas. E. Levey, Hon. P. Garneau, Col. Rhodes, John Gilmour, John Burstall, Hon. C. C. DeLéry, J. B. Renaud, Jos. Hamel, (Sir) Jas. M. LeMoine, Thos. McGreevy, Hon. Chas. Alleyne, C. F. Smith, A. P. Caron, Thos. Beckett, Jas. Gibb, R. R. Dobell and E. G. Meredith, secretary. Hon. E. Chinic and Messrs. C. F. Smith and R. R. Dobell were

named trustees to accept for the nominal sum of \$1, the lease held by the city corporation, the latter continuing liable for the annual rent or \$200. The intention of the association was to plant a certain number of shade trees upon the Plains, and to turn the place into a driving park. The scheme fell through, however, when it was discovered how soon the lease from the Ursuline Nuns was to expire, and nothing has been done since, except, that the Quebec Turf Club has had a lease of the property for some years past and has looked after the maintenance of the fences, etc.

· A MONTREALER'S PLAN.

In September, 1883, another plan of embellishment for the battleground was suggested by Mr. John Horn, of Montreal, in a letter which he addressed to the presidents of the Institut Canadien and Literary and Historical Societies of Quebec. Mr. Horn's plan was to have a heroic statue of Champlain in the centre, and at the four corners those of Wolfe, Montcalm, Carleton and Laval, with promenades from the centre to each of the corners, having parterres of flowers, etc., on either side of them, Mr. Horn urged that the Plains of Abraham, honoured by the memory of two heroic chiefs should be considered as a national possession—the rendez-vous of all Canada. The eastern part was sanctified by the memorable combat between Wolfe and Montcalm in 1759; the western, by that between Levis and Murray in 1760. The whole of Canada, he said, is interested in keeping intact and inviolable this sacred site, sanctified by the blood of the heroes of two great nations. To both nationalities occupying the soil about Quebec this battlefield is holy ground. It was not alone the destiny of Canada which was decided in 1759 on these

famous Plains, but that of the entire continent. "If ever an attempt is made to divert from its present object this cherished site, the whole of Canada with one voice

WILL DENOUNCE THE OUTRAGE.

Almost, ever since 1789, horse races have been held on the Plains in the fall of the year. Before the formation of the Quebec Turf Club, these equestrian contests were conducted by officers of the garrison. Lord William Lennox, son of the Duke of Richmond, who was Governor-General of Canada, frequently rode his own horses in these races, and Frederick Tolfrey, in his "Sportsman in Canada," says that in 1817, "Quebec was redolent of Epsom; the Plains of Abraham vied with the Surrey Downs; and gallops and sweats were more thought of than morning drills and evening parades. Expectation, anticipation, excitement, trepidation *et omne quod exit* in action were the order of the day, until the day came round in due order to test the relative qualities of the contending quadrupeds. Even the proverbially apathetic and phlegmatic Yankees were "pretty considerably frustrated," and the eager throngs who flocked to the course told how great was the interest felt for the sport we had provided for all classes."

The details of the two battles that have made the Plains of Abraham for ever famous are known to every Canadian school boy. The thick of the fight between the opposing forces of Wolfe and Montcalm occurred upon the still open portion of the Plains now used as a race course, where the British struggled hard ere they carried the little height, then held it by the defending force,

upon which the gaol is now erected. All along the Grande Allée as far as No. 2 Martello tower, the British met with a more or less stubborn resistance. Then the enemy fled in wild confusion before them. Every one knows the story of the fall of the heroic Wolfe, fatally wounded, in the hour of victory upon the site of the monument since erected to his memory. The well from which a draught of water was drawn to cool his dying lips was but recently filled in. It was situated in a corner of the property now owned and occupied by Mr. Alphonse Charlebois, contractor. Hawkins, in his "Picture of Quebec," says truly that "any one who visits the celebrated Plains of Abraham, the scene of this glorious fight—equally rich in natural beauty and historic recollections will admit that no site could be found better adapted for displaying the evolutions of military skill and discipline, or the exertion of physical force and determined valour.

The battle ground presents almost a level surface from the brink of the St. Lawrence to the St. Foye road. The Grande Allée or road to Cap Rouge, passed through its centre—and was commanded by a field redoubt, in all probability the four gun battery on the English left, which was captured by the light infantry, as mentioned in General Townshend's letter. The remains of this battery are distinctly seen" (this was written in 1834), "near to the present race stand. There were also two other redoubts, one upon the rising ground in the rear of Mr. C. Campbell's house," (now the residence of A. Charlebois)—"the death scene of Wolfe—and the other towards the St. Foye road, which it was intended to command. On the site of the country seat called Marchmont, the property of the Honorable J. Stewart, and, in 1834, the residence of Mr. Daly, Secretary of the Province, there was also a small redoubt, commanding the intrenched path leading to the Cove. This was taken possession of by the advanced guard of the light infantry, immediately on ascending the heights. At the period of the battle, the Plains

were without fences or enclosures, and extended to the walls on the St. Lewis side. The surface was dotted over with bushes, and the woods on either flank were more dense than at present, affording shelter to the French and Indian marksmen."

Amongst the many brilliant military fetes of a later date which were witnessed upon the plains, Dr. Henry, in his "Events in a Military Life," tells of a brigade day in September, 1836, under the direction of Lieutenant-General Sir John Colborne. Three regiments of the garrison turned out—the First Foot, or Royals, the 66th and the 79th. The review attracted a large number of spectators, and the gifted author, who it may be remembered was one of the military surgeons present at the autopsy on the remains of Napoléon Bonaparte at St. Helena, tells us that "As the town was full of Americans, Brother Jonathan and his family mustered strong, and the female members were well dressed and looked very pretty; showing no silly timidity, but great good sense and courage during the firing."

The plains are still employed for inspection parades of the local forces, and also for the mounted drill and manœuvres of "B" Battery Royal Canadian Artillery and the Queen's Own Canadian Hussars. In fact, if the plains should disappear, there would be no suitable ground for the drill of the mounted forces. The Esplanade is far too small and the Cove Fields much too uneven.

On the side towards the river, where it is fringed by hawthorn, hazel and other bushes, the battlefield retains much of its original wildness. Only last year a local sportsman, Mr. S. S. Hatt flushed and killed a snipe there. And ere the last traces of winter's snow have fled from the hollows amongst the underbrush, the young ladies of Quebec who stroll in groups about the plains on the lookout for the hepatica and violets, the trilliums and trailing arbutus, and other early flowers that bloom in the spring, are reminded of the blood-stained character of the

ground upon which they tread each time that they pluck the pure, white bed of the sanguinaria, or Blood-root and chance to break its brittle stem and tuberous root, from which the red drops fall like blood."—(*Montreal Star*, 4th April, 1899.)

E. T. D. CHAMBERS.

Quebec, April 1899.

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

*Resolutions of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec,
adopted on 14th December, 1898.*

" Moved by Sir James M. LeMoine, Vice-President, seconded by Peter Johnston, Esq., associate member :

1. That the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec views with deep concern the period in the near future when the ninety-nine years' lease of the Plains of Abraham to the Dominion Government will expire, lest the same should be divided and sold in building lots, as calculated to yield the proprietors a larger return than derived from the present lease.

2. That such an untoward event would obliterate this sacred and famous site, deprive the citizens of Quebec of the prestige this historic battle-field, moistened by the blood of the two heroic leaders, Wolfe and Montcalm, lends the Ancient Capital, and do away with one of Quebec's most attractive scenes for visitors from every land.

3. That a copy of the above be duly forwarded to the Government of this Dominion, to the Government of this Province, to the leading Historical Societies of Canada, asking for their co-operation, and to the English and French press of this Province.

—(*Quebec Morning Chronicle*).

14th December, 1898.

LES PLAINES D'ABRAHAM.

A une assemblée spéciale du Bureau de direction de la "Société Littéraire et Historique de Québec, tenue en cette ville le 18 avril courant, sous la présidence de M. Philippe Baby Casgrain, les résolutions suivantes ont été unanimement adoptées.

Proposé par sir James M. LeMoine, vice-président, secondé par M. Cyrille Tessier, membre du bureau de direction :

1^o Qu'en vue de l'expression de l'opinion publique énergiquement accentuée en Canada et même à l'étranger, au sujet de l'éventualité prochaine de la disposition du terrain des Plaines d'Abraham, en lots à bâtir, par les propriétaires du fonds, savoir "Les Révérendes Dames Religieuses Ursulines de Québec", à l'expiration, en l'année 1901, de leur bail au gouvernement fédéral, il importe de conserver dans le domaine public le champ de bataille illustré par les armes anglaises et françaises, où les vainqueurs et les vaincus ont eu une gloire égale et sur lequel s'est décidé le sort de l'Amérique du Nord et du Canada.

2^o Que la Société Littéraire et Historique de Québec ayant pour un de ses principaux objets la recherche et la conservation de nos documents et gloires historiques dans tout le Canada, est appelée en premier lieu à promouvoir le projet de conserver les

Plaines d'Abraham comme site ou monument historique qui intéresse non seulement la cité et la province de Québec, mais toutes les provinces du Dominion et même tout l'empire britannique qui y a acquis un titre de gloire mémorable.

Chambre de la Société Littéraire et Historique,

ALEX. ROBERTSON,

Secrétaire, pro tem.

—(Le Soleil).

Québec, 19 avril 1899.

THE NUMISMATIC AND ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY OF
MONTREAL.

Château de Ramezay,

Montreal, Nov. 19th 1898.

Sir James M. LEMOINE,

Spencer Grange, Quebec.

Dear Sir,—I have the honor to enclose you copy of the resolution adopted at its last monthly meeting by the Numismatic and Historical Society, protesting against the possible division into lots, for sale, of the historic Plains of Abraham.

I hope that our mildly-worded protest will convey clearly the energetic determination of our society "to preserve the old monuments of the land and its history, and to erect new ones."

I have the honor to be, dear Sir,

Yours faithfully,

C. A. DE LOTBINIÈRE HARWOOD,

Secretary.

EXTRACT of the minutes of the monthly meeting of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal, held at the Château de Ramezay, on the 15th November, 1898 :

In the chair the Hon. Justice Baby, President. A communication to the President from Sir James M. LeMoine having been read, on behalf of the Quebec Literary and Historical Society, notifying this Society of the possibility of the historic Plains of Abraham being divided, at no distant date, into lots for sale, it was :

Resolved,—That this Society would view with deep regret the cutting up into lots, or other disposal of the Plains of Abraham, on which the two gallant chiefs, Wolfe and Montcalm, fell, and it trusts that the Federal Government of Canada, on the approaching expiration of its lease from the Reverend Ladies of the Ursulines of Quebec, will take such necessary step as shall preserve intact to the public at large, these historical grounds.

Resolved,—That the Secretary be instructed to forward copy of the above resolution to the Quebec Literary and Historical Society.

C. A. DE LOTBINIÈRE HARWOOD,
Secretary.

Montreal, Nov. 19th 1898.

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

The following is a copy of the resolutions unanimously passed at the meeting of the Nova Scotia Historical Society, January 10th, 1899, in reference to the preservation of the historic associations of the Plains of Abraham.

" Whereas, it has been represented on good authority that the lease of the historic Plains of Abraham, made to the Dominion by the Revd. the Nuns of the Ursuline Convent of Quebec, is to terminate in the year 1901, and that the owners of the property may then place it on the market with the possible result of completely destroying its existence as a public park and centre of wide historic interest.

" Therefore, resolved, that the Historical Society of Nova Scotia place on record its strong desire that the Federal Government of the Dominion shall arrange to preserve these grounds intact, and keep them in such a condition as may best keep alive historical associations conducive to the development of a national pride in our history, and a patriotic devotion to our country, and that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Dominion Government, and to the Historical Society of Quebec.

" (Signed)

W. L. PAYZANT,

Recording Secretary.

" Halifax, N. S.,

" February 11th, 1899."

—(*Quebec Morning Chronicle*).—

Ottawa, 9th February, 1899.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, transmitting a copy of a resolution adopted by the Lundy's Lane Historical Society of Niagara Falls, Ontario, drawing the attention of this Government to the termination in the near future of the lease held by it of the Plains of Abraham, Quebec, and expressing the earnest hope that these historic grounds may be purchased by the Government and maintained

by it for all time "in a manner worthy of the country, and as an incentive to the patriotic instincts of all Canadians," and to state that the same shall be submitted to His Excellency the Governor General in Council.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

P. PELLETIER,

Acting Under-Secretary of State.

Sir JAMES LEMOINE, Kt.,
Quebec.

THE WOMEN'S CANADIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF
OTTAWA.

Officers: Honorary President: Lady Laurier: President: Mrs. Geo. E. Foster; Vice-Presidents: Lady Caron, Mrs. R. R. Dobell, Mme La Mothe, Miss Harmon, Lady Bourinot, Mrs. T. C. Keefer, Mrs. D. K. Egan; Recording Secretary: Mrs. C. O'Connor; Treasurer: Mrs. T. Ahern; Corresponding Secretary, Miss Kenny, B. A.

Moved by Lady Ritchie, seconded by Mrs. Geo. E. King, and resolved:

That, whereas, in the opinion of the society, it is a matter of national importance that the plains of Abraham shall be preserved unaltered, this society protest against any disposal of them which shall not maintain these historical grounds intact, in the interest of loyal and patriotic generations to come.

Carried by a standing vote.

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

"The Plains of Abraham, which are popularly supposed to be the property of the Dominion Government, may, at no very distant date, pass beyond its control and be divided up into common, every-day building lots, separated into blocks by narrow streets. The Government is simply the occupant of the property in virtue of a ninety-nine years' lease from the Revd. Ladies who have the patent of the land, and to whom it reverts in the course of the next two years. Nobody can blame these Ladies for doing what everybody else would do under similar circumstances, and for attempting to turn their property to the most profitable account, as soon as the present lease expires. They quite understand that it will pay them much better to cut it up into building lots than to renew its lease, *en bloc*, for the \$200 or thereabouts that they now annually receive for it from the Federal authorities, and this, it has been already given out, is their present intention.

Now there is good reason for the belief that not only the citizens of Quebec, but the entire population of Canada, would gladly see some sacrifice made for the purpose of preserving the famous battle field intact. It is surely not too much to expect that the enthusiastic loyalists of the West, who wax so warm at the bare idea of the erection in Quebec of a memorial of Montgomery's repulse and death at the cannon's mouth, will protest more vehemently still if the Federal authorities fail to make the necessary provision for maintaining in its integrity, the ground upon which the immortal Wolfe died victorious. French Canada, justly proud of the equally gallant Montcalm and of his heroic defence of Quebec, following his brilliant victory over the English General on the heights of Montmorenci, will, no doubt, object no less vehemently to the despoiling of the scene of one of the most glorious exploits of its forefathers.

The soil watered by the blood of two such heroes, to whom valor gave a common death, and history a common fame, is too

precious a national heirloom for a Dominion with such promise of future greatness as ours to divest itself of for the saving of a few thousands of dollars. Quebec, without the Plains of Abraham, would be like Mount Vernon without the tomb of Washington, or Stratford-on-Avon without the burial place of Shakespeare and Anne Hatheway's cottage. We have lost our city gates and much more of what was of interest to visiting tourists, and it becomes not only our own people; but those of the whole of Canada who profit by the large annual influx of summer visitors to the Dominion, to see to the retention of the best of what now remains to us in the shape of desirable relics of a glorious historic past. Some years ago,—about 1876,—a number of Quebecers, amongst whom was Hon. R. R. Dobell, formed themselves into an association for the purpose of acquiring the Plains of Abraham and establishing a driving park thereon. The scheme fell through, principally because of the difficulties connected with the ownership of the land. Mr. Dobell is now a member of the Dominion Government. To him, as well as to Prime Minister, who owes his seat in Parliament to the votes of Quebecers, it is only reasonable that the people of Quebec, no less than those in other parts of the Dominion who are interested in this question, should look for the maintenance of the most famous battlefield of Canada in its present entirety. The patriotism and the national pride of a united nation will look to the Government to take this step, and to do it betimes, at as reasonable a cost as it may find possible, before any further and final disposition of the property is made by those who possess the absolute right of dealing with it upon the approaching expiration of the present lease.”—(*Quebec Morning Chronicle*).

Quebec, November, 11th 1898.

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THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

Protests on all sides against dividing the property.

ENERGETIC PROTEST FROM P. E. ISLAND.

The Battlefield is the National Glory of two Empires,

“The movement in favor of retaining intact the battlefield of the Plains of Abraham, is becoming a truly national one. A correspondent writing from Prince Edward Island says amongst other things :

The protest which a Committee of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec has found necessary to make against an alleged intention to alienate the Plains of Abraham from the use of the public is exciting a widespread interest throughout Canada, and when it reaches Great Britain, France and the United States, when the bare statement of a desire to make money out of one of the grandest reminiscences of the past is told without being softened by extenuating circumstances, it will arouse disgust.

The distinguished historians, Parkman, Casgrain, Bancroft, Warburton, Smith, Hawkins, Garneau, Ferland, Beatson, Miles, LeMoine and others have derived inspiration from the genius loci, and thousands of visitors have felt a patriotic glow while standing on the plateau of Abraham, so identified with the city of Quebec, and where imaginative minds have fancied they saw the shades of Wolfe and Montcalm, and of the brave of two races who mingled their blood on the soil and equally shared the glory. It seems determined that no such opportunities shall exist in the

future. As well obliterate Quebec itself as obliterate or render unrecognizable this famed site. The historic city deprived of its battleground would be as a temple with the holy of holies eliminated, the divinity looted. After the battle on that murky September morning of fifty-nine, this battleground became sanctified by the fierce baptism of war. Every Frenchman and Briton shared in the fame that had caused it to become part of the archives of two Empires, a share that though but an impalpable feeling of pride and glory, is valid and to be preserved intact. In a matter so important to the city's interests, the public spirited citizens will strengthen the hands of the Society's Committee,—if only on the meaner plane of the moneys visitors bring. If correctly reported, the proposed intention reminds in its contempt for national glory of Communists pulling down the Arc de Triomphe at Paris,—although we do not hear that the Communists sold it."

A MONTREAL VIEW.

The *Montreal Gazette* says:—"In the year 1902 the long lease under which the Dominion Government has held the Plains of Abraham will expire and the property will revert to the Ursuline Nuns of Quebec. The question arises what, under these circumstances, is to be the fate of the historic battleground. Of course, unless some special patriotic effort is made to prevent such a transformation, the ground in question will share the fate of so many other spots that were made memorable by great events. It may be disposed of for any purpose in the ordinary course of business—turned for instance into building lots. Nor would there be any justice in finding fault with the reverend ladies who will own the property in question if they disposed of it to the best advantage. The reproach would fall upon the community, which, knowing how prized for historic associations, the Plains of Abraham must be to every Canadian—to every Briton

indeed—who is worthy of the name, and being duly warned of the danger of such desecration, had taken no effective measure to preserve the famous field from base oblivion,..... We cannot look upon the Plains of Abraham as of merely local interest. There is not a Canadian from the Atlantic to the Pacific who has not a share in its significance. Nor is that all. Wolfe's victory was the harbinger of the ultimate triumph of the British arms by which Canada became what, in spite of perils and temptations, it has ever since remained.

For years, moreover, Canada and the colonies to the south of it rendered a common allegiance, and there are families, not a few in the United States to-day, that had representatives in Wolfe's army. The question is really, therefore, of continental as well as Imperial concern. As for our French Canadian fellow-citizens, their relation to the historic ground has the pathos which belongs to honorable reverse, and the undying union of the names of Montcalm and Wolfe. Theirs, too, are the countless association of its pioneer days, uses and naming; and to efface through lack of timely and generous effort, so many clustering memories would be a slight to the generations that are gone, to the makers and saviours of old Canada, and to those who gave their lives for its falling cause. In fine, to allow a field of fame that has been pressed by the footsteps of saints and martyrs, patriots and heroes to be confounded with the common earth would be a slight on Canada's worthiest, for which the generations to come would look back upon as with wonder."

—(*Quebec Morning Chronicle.*)

7th December, 1898.

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

" In the year 1901, the long lease under which the Dominion Government has held the Plains of Abraham will expire and the property will revert to the sisters of the Hotel Dieu of Quebec. The question arises what, under these circumstances, is to be the fate of the historic-battleground. Of course, unless some special patriotic effort is made to prevent such a transformation, the ground in question will share the fate of so many other spots that were made memorable by great events. It may be disposed of for any purpose in the ordinary course of business—turned, for instance, into building lots. Nor would there be any justice in finding fault with the reverend ladies who will own the property in question if they disposed of it to the best advantage. The reproach would fall upon the community, which, knowing how prized for historic associations, the Plains of Abraham must be to every Canadian—to every Briton, indeed—who is worthy of the name, and being duly warned of the danger of such desecration, had taken no effective measure to preserve the famous field from base oblivion. How many spots in this ancient province that were hallowed in the thoughts of thousands by their connection with important passages and striking figures in the life of the past have been blotted out of memory and made impossible to identify by just such a transformation as that which threatens to befall the scene of Wolfe's immortal victory! Happily the spirit of ungenerous apathy, if it still survives amongst a portion of our population, is far from being general.

On the contrary, there is a pretty widespread feeling that every point that is in any way identified with the age of the founders and pioneers, our Indian wars, with the era of international struggle, with the spread of religion and education, with the triumphs of invention and industrial and commercial progress, should by some distinctive monument or token be saved from the

levelling process of time. To the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Montreal, the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, the Canadian Institute of Toronto, the Woman's Historical Association of Ontario and other like bodies in the provinces the Dominion is indebted for the preservation of many memorials of the past that would otherwise have become to dull forgetfulness a prey. This city is especially indebted to the Antiquarian Society for a preservative work of this kind, the value of which is universally acknowledged. It was in keeping with its character that the society should join in the protest of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec against any possible diversion of our most famous and fruitful battlefield from its monumental and historic character. We cannot look upon the Plains of Abraham as of merely local interest. There is not a Canadian from the Atlantic to the Pacific who has not a share in its significance. Nor is that all. Wolfe's victory was the harbinger of the ultimate triumph of the British arms by which Canada became what in spite of perils and temptations, it has ever since remained.

For years, moreover, Canada and the colonies to the south of it rendered a common allegiance, and there are families not a few in the United States today that had representatives in Wolfe's army. The question is really, therefore, of continental as well as Imperial concern. As for our French-Canadian fellow citizens, their relation to the historic ground has the pathos which belongs to honorable reverse, and the undying union of the names of Montcalm and Wolfe. Theirs too are the countless association of its pioneer days, uses and naming; and to efface through lack of timely and generous effort, so many clustering memories would be a slight to the generations that are gone, to the makers and saviours of old Canada, and to those who gave their lives for its falling cause. In fine, to allow a field of fame that has been pressed by the footsteps of saints and martyrs,

patriots and heroes to be confounded with the common earth would be a slight on Canada's worthiest, for which the generations to come would look back upon as with wonder."

—(*Montreal Gazette*, December 8th, 1898).

AMERICANS ARE INTERESTED.

The *Chicago Times-Herald* has the following editorial on the preservation of the Plains of Abraham:—

"The tourist in Quebec is sure to visit the Ursuline Convent and to give himself over to reverent emotions as stands above the spot where the remains of Montcalm are said to lie. In the long review of history racial prejudices are forgotten, and the disposition is to honor the memory of the vanquished as well as that of the victor. It is felt that the whole neighborhood is consecrated by the bravery and devotion of the French and English generals alike, so that to-day their names are linked together, not as if they were enemies, but as if they had gone down to death in an imperishable friendship to be known forever as Wolfe and Montcalm.

"Apparently, however, neither the Ursuline Sisters nor the Canadian Government shares in the common sentiment. It is the former who propose to cut up the Plains of Abraham for building lots and the latter which consents to the desecration. The Plains came into the possession of the convent as far back as 1667, and they have been held by the Government on a ninety-nine year lease since 1802. The approaching expiration of the lease is the excuse for the present business transaction, which is practical enough for the latest boom town, but startlingly incongruous in Quebec,

" No wonder, therefore, that protests are heard on every hand. The first murmurs of the Canadian historical societies have been re-echoed not only throughout the Dominion, but also in the United States and Great Britain.

" There is no desire or purpose to reflect upon the defeated, but only the sincere wish to preserve the stage upon which was enacted a great historical drama.

" One fault of the century is that it is too apt to neglect such places, and in this case it is greatly aggravated by the fact, that it cannot appeal to a necessity. Quebec is not pressing upon the Plains, the Sisters are in no extremity; the Government can well afford to release the ground or to purchase it outright.

" For the final outcome of the affair Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Ministry will be held responsible, and it should give heed to the remonstrances of the city's Mayor. If it does not, it may discover that the Plains of Abraham are a more important factor in Canadian politics than some of the liveliest questions of the day."

—(From *Morning Chronicle*, 11th April, 1899.)

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

" It is curious to note how the American press appreciates the proposal to sell off the Plains of Abraham as building lots. For instance the *New York Commercial Advertiser* characterizes it as a sacrilege which it declares, however, to be not singular when all the facts are understood. " The Plains of Abraham," it says, " have been the property of French nuns ever since Canada was a French colony, and as the spot marks the downfall of French power in Canada no sentiment clusters about it that appeals to its present owners. In its present shape it is only a reminder to the French inhabitants of Canada of the humiliation of France

at the hands of Great Britain." The Chicago *Times-Herald* also treats it as a desecration, and adds:—"The land ought to have been purchased by the Government long ago, which has preserved the famous site so far through the payment of a small rental. It was a case in which there was no need to take any risks, and there would never have been any doubt about the desirability of maintaining the grounds as near as might be in their original condition. The shame of the present subdivision into building lots is that there is no actual or prospective pressure for building sites in Quebec. The commercial and industrial future of the place, if it has any, lies along the St. Charles River, in another direction from the Plains of Abraham."

—(*Daily Telegraph*, 17th April, 1899.)

PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

WHAT THE "LONDON STANDARD" HAS TO SAY IN REFERENCE
TO THEM.

The *London Standard*, in a strong protest against the alienation from the public of the Plains of Abraham, speaks as follows regarding Quebec and its situation:—"Prosperity means growth, and growth is seldom consistent with the preservation of beauty. The city has long been noted as the most picturesque in the Dominion. It alone retains something of an old-world aspect. Indeed, though Quebec would be regarded as a modern city on this side of the Atlantic, it is one of the oldest in America, dating its foundation from the year 1608. At first little more than a trading port, it was aided in its development by becoming a centre for the Recollet and Jesuit missions, and by the middle of

the last century was a fortified town of considerable importance. Its growth, since it passed into British hands, has been rapid so that many of the buildings are comparatively modern. Still, its broken and irregular outlines, the ramparts, and the crowning citadel give it a quaint and characteristic charm. Much, no doubt is due to its situation. Just here the St. Lawrence, already a grand river, suddenly opens out. Hitherto it has been hemmed in by lofty and craggy banks; now it becomes a broadening estuary. Just at this point a bold headland is formed by the entry of a smaller river from the west, and up this the city climbs from the water-side to the plateau above. Even a commonplace town would acquire a certain picturesqueness from such a site, but Quebec itself is anything but commonplace."

—(*Quebec Morning Chronicle*, April 11th, 1899).

HISTORIC PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

Still causing anxiety all over the Empire.

STRONG LETTER FROM ENGLAND.

The Executive Committee of the National Trust on the subject.

Ottawa, April 27.—"Sir John Bourinot to-day received a letter from Sir Robert Hunter, chairman of the Executive Committee of National Trust for places of historic interest or natural beauty, and of which the Duke of Westminster is President and Princess Louise vice-president. Sir Robert says: "I have no

doubt that the proposal to build over the Plains of Abraham has come under the notice of the Royal Society of Canada. On behalf of the National Trust I venture to express a hope that energetic action will be taken to prevent the destruction of this historic site and to assure you that such action will receive the warmest sympathy from the members of that Trust, and the support of a large body of public opinion in England."

—(*Quebec Morning Chronicle*, 28th April, 1899).

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

Both *Le Courrier du Canada* and *L'Événement* made the following announcement last evening :—

"The Plains of Abraham have just been divided into 800 building lots of 31 feet front each. Nine streets have been laid out.

"Notwithstanding the protests which have arisen from all parts against the desecration of this hallowed ground that was drenched with the blood of the heroes of the two great races who inhabit this country ; notwithstanding the demands that this property should be preserved intact as national property, it will soon be conceded and before long disappear under blocks of buildings. All Quebec should protest against this."

Our contemporaries are unquestionably right. All Quebec should protest against such desecration.

—(*Daily Telegraph*, 22nd March, 1899).

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

To the Editor of *Daily Telegraph*.

Towards the end of June the district camp of 3,400 men will be located at St. Joseph de Lévis, when the training will close with a grand review before Major-General Hutton and possibly His Excellency Lord Minto ; moreover, at the request of Quebec's energetic Mayor that military spectacle may be held on the Plains of Abraham. It is a short cry from now to 1901, when from present appearances all military field-days there will cease forever, seeing that the long lease will then expire ; and that historic field, so jealously guarded by the Imperial authorities before its transfer to the Federal Government, so much so that it was sacrilege for the caretaker to turn a sod for even a ten yard potato patch, will revert to the sisters of the Ursuline Convent who intend to cut it up into building lots, convent sites, and what not. This historic battle ground, from the loud outcry raised in all parts through and by the press against its desecration, is held sacred in the hearts of the citizens of the whole British Empire and even of the United States.

From a hard business point of view they are right in their designs, and the full, but not exorbitant, value of this property should undoubtedly be paid them ; also it will be a gracious act on the part of these revd. ladies to bow to such great public opinion, and place no difficulties in the way of parting with the Plains of Abraham to the Government " intact as they now stand."

Leaving sentiment and business out of it, there is another point of view from which this matter must be reconnoitred, and that is the military one. Quebec is a garrison city and the troops have no other drill ground but the Plains, the Cove fields being too uneven, and the Esplanade too small for present drill manoeuvres ; in fact even the present remnant, seventy-one and three-quarter acres of that historic battlefield, is small enough for

the movements of the Quebec city brigade of 1,200 men, 185 horses and 12 guns. Hence it is an absolute necessity for the Dominion Government to purchase the present field for military purposes, while at the same time preserving it intact forever as national property.

Its correct commercial value can be easily calculated, seeing its neighbor, beautiful Marchmont, all in a high state of cultivation, with its chateau, vinery, gardens and embellishments is for sale, a property almost the same size as the Plains, but for above reasons far more valuable.

Petitions will doubtless be circulated, and if along with those of Quebec's citizens, they carried the signatures of the officers of not only the 7th Military District, but of every district in the country, as it equally concerns them, they should have greater weight with the Government, whose Cabinet contains Quebec members and citizens, to wit: Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir Henri Joly de Lotbinière, the Honorables R. R. Dobell and C. Fitzpatrick. Surely these honorable gentlemen, being patriotic Canadians, endowed with historic sentiments, have an *esprit de corps* and patriotism for Quebec, which claims three of them as citizens, and for the old city they have the honor to represent in the Federal Parliament, and can prevent such a great loss to the defences of the Dominion, by causing such legislation to be enacted for the purchase of this historic battle ground "now at this present session," because the passing of every week will doubtless add to the difficulties of preserving in to Canada.

F. C. WURTELE, CAPT. R. L.

8th Royal Rifles.

—(*Daily Telegraph*, 20th April, 1899).

PLAINS OF ABRAHAM.

"A return was laid before Parliament at Ottawa yesterday, showing that as far back as February, 1875, the Ursuline nuns, the proprietors of the Plains of Abraham, wanted the Government to cancel the lease between them and it, which, as already stated in these columns, was entered into in 1802 for 99 years and will therefore expire only in 1901. This circumstance alone would seem to indicate that there is not very much in the contention that the necessity for cutting up this historic ground into building lots is very urgent. But in any case it is well to note the reception which the application of the nuns met with at the time. General Selby Smyth reported adversely to their petition. He said: "I consider it to be very improper to give up the right of the Government over any land adjacent to the first-class fortress of Quebec." In 1881 the question came up again, and General Luard, to whom the matter was referred, endorsed the view of his predecessor."

—(*Daily Telegraph*, 9th May, 1899).

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF THE GREAT DEPARTED.

Despite an occasional, but insignificant outburst of racial prejudice, it is consoling, to be in a position to point to a healthy union of all races and creeds on Canadian soil when occasion offers, to honor by testimonials or monuments the memory of those dear to either race.

A striking illustration of this noble sentiment was brought out, when the citizens of Montreal, in 1808, subscribed to erect a lofty shaft, to the hero of Trafalgar, Horatio, Lord Nelson: we

find a list of the subscribers in a recent Montreal journal as follows :

FRENCH CANADIANS AND THE MONUMENT

" As in generally known, the Nelson monument was erected in 1808 by popular subscription under the auspices of a committee composed of Sir John Johnson, Chief Justice Monk, John Richardson, John Ogilvy and Louis Chaboillez. The total amount raised was £1132, 16s, 8d. Among the French Canadians who subscribed were: the Seminary, £20; Louis Chaboillez, £5; M. Blondeau, £2; J. Perrinault, £2; J. de Longueuil, £3; Ch. de Lotbinière, £6; J. B. Raymond, £5; J. M. Mondelet, £2; Louis Charland, £5; Pierre Fortier, £1, 3s, 4d; Joseph Lamothe, £1; S. Gosselin, £1; S. de Beaujeu, £2, 10s; F. Desrivières, £5; J. Lacroix, £3; D. Rousseau, £5; C. Laframboise, £3; J. Puissein, £1; E. St. Dizier, £1, 3s, 4d; S. Dumas, £1, 3s, 4d; J. Bouthillier, £1, 3s, 4d; Jos. Bedard, £2; Pierre Berthelet, £3; J. P. Leprohon, £2, 10s; S. Beaubien, £2, 6s; St. George Dupré, £2; Louis Lamontagne, £1; Pierre Lambert, £1; Louis Guy, £1, 3s, 4d; P. H. Latour, \$2; E. Deschambault, £1."

Nineteen years later, viz, in 1827, it was the turn of the citizens of Quebec, under the auspices of an enlightened Governor General, the Earl of Dalhousie, to dedicate a monument to the two heroic leaders Wolfe and Montcalm, both fallen in the battle of the Plains of Abraham, fought on 13th September, 1759.

It bears the inspiring inscription, prepared by the scholarly Dr. John Charlton Fisher.

Mortem. Virtus. Communem.
Famam. Historia.
Monumentum. Posteritas.
Dedit.

In 1855, the citizens of the Ancient Capital, in conjunction with the National association, the *St. Jean-Baptiste Society*,

raised on the north eastern portion of the Plains of Abraham, a graceful shaft, crowned with the statue of Bellona, to the memory of generals Lévis and Murray, who fought on 28th April, 1760, the second battle of the Plains of Abraham."

So that this renowned battlefield, by what took place on its southern area, recalls the victory of Wolfe, an english victory, and by the defeat of Murray, on its north eastern portion, a french victory. Is not the soil here doubly sacred?

STADACONNA.
